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Letter dated 23 June 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

We write to convey to you, on behalf of the Governments of Andorra, Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Germany, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, San Marino, Sweden and Switzerland, our interest in and concern about the process involving the adoption of a new resolution on the protection of children affected by armed conflict.

At the time of the open debate in February 2005, our Governments were genuinely encouraged to hear the many statements of commitment to build upon the positive steps set forth in the Security Council's five existing resolutions on this subject. Since that time, however, we have been troubled by the fact that the Council has yet to adopt a new resolution on this critical issue.

Given how far the Council's resolutions have come to make the protection of children in armed conflict a priority for Member States and the United Nations system as a whole, we have high expectations for this year's resolution. In particular, we would hope that the new resolution will establish a robust mechanism for monitoring and reporting on serious international crimes against children in all conflict settings. It is apparent to all that such a mechanism is long overdue.

The resolution should also include provisions for effectively implementing existing Security Council resolutions, particularly 1460 (2003) and 1539 (2004). In this regard, we support the development of a working group on children and armed conflict that would be tasked to identify appropriate steps to take against parties that continue to use or recruit child soldiers in violation of international law, thereby flouting Security Council calls to stop such violations.

We understand that these are among the points on which agreement has eluded the Council over the past 18 weeks. We would therefore urge the Council to renew efforts to reach agreement on these elements, and to hold the interests of children paramount in the negotiation process so that their protection takes priority.

We believe this is a crucial moment for all of us in preserving the significant gains already made on this issue and in translating those gains into lasting improvements for the millions of children who suffer the horrific effects of armed conflict. We strongly encourage the Council to adopt a bold new resolution without delay.

05-39779 (E) 240605

We should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Allan **Rock**
Ambassador
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